

multitude. The line between the sacral usage and
 licentious-
 ness was broken down at some remote resorts, but
 in the great
 temples the conduct of the women was not at all
 shameless,
 although they were trained to please. They
 observed perfect
 decorum. No one could venture on any impropriety
 with them.
 The bystanders would not allow it, and the
 proceedings were all
 controlled by strict rules. The Brahmins
 propounded a doctrine
 that intercourse with the consecrated women
 would free from
 sin.¹ The vows show us the motive which
 maintained this usage,
 and these statements clearly show the
 conventionalization which
 enveloped the whole. Although the practices in
 the temples
 have undergone some modification, they still exist.
 There are
 secret mysteries, and dramatic representations of
 mythological
 incidents, which seem like survivals of the ancient
 usages above
 mentioned.- There are courtesans at the temples
 near which
 pilgrims congregate, and they pay part of their
 earnings to the
 temple.³ The holy festival of Jugganatha, at Puri,
 which is a
 spring festival of Vedic origin, is a kind of
 Saturnalia, in which
 the bonds of social order are loosened and the
 standards of
 decency are laid aside. There are rites in which "
 words are
 uttered by persons who, on other occasions, would
 think them-
 selves disgraced by the use of them/'⁴ The Phalgun
 festival in
 northern India commemorates Krishna's
 voluptuous amuse-
 ments. The rites are indecent.⁵ The mythological
 stories about
 the gods have to be converted by interpretation or
 special pleas
 into something which modern mores can tolerate.⁶
 Songs, dances,
 pantomimes, and mythological dramas are

represented in front
of the image of a deity by men, but in the presence
of a general
company of men and women.⁷ The Sakta
worshippers are a sect
who worship Sakta, the mighty, mysterious,
feminine force
recognized in nature, and which they personify as
the Mother of
the Universe, like the ancient Mother-goddess.
This goddess is
manifested, for Hindoos, in natural appetites, in
highly developed

¹ Dubois, *MCEUTS de rinde*, I, 434-439; 478-480; II, 353, 366,
370, 377.

² Wilkins, *Modern Hinduism*, 94, 216, 290; Monier-Williams,
Brakmanism and
Hinduism, 451.

³ Wilkins, 242.

⁴ *Roy.-As.Soc.*, 1841, 239; Wilkins, 286.

⁶ Wilkins, 235.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 317.

⁷ *Ibid.**216.